

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6127

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2004

Title: An act relating to the from the heart of Washington program.

Brief Description: Promoting Washington state agriculture.

Sponsors: Senators Swecker, Rasmussen, Mulliken, Winsley and McAuliffe; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture: 1/20/04, 1/22/04 [DP].
Passed Senate: 2/11/04, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Swecker, Chair; Brandland, Vice Chair; Rasmussen and Sheahan.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The From the Heart of Washington Program was developed and funded with one-time federal grant moneys available to the Washington State Department of Agriculture. This program was designed to encourage Washington citizens to buy Washington-grown and Washington-processed food and agricultural products and to promote the value of agriculture and family farms in Washington State.

With the exhaustion of the one-time federal grant funds, a new governance structure is sought for the From the Heart of Washington Program that allows operational flexibility and encourages non-state funds to be invested in the program.

Summary of Bill: A successor organization may be created to assume responsibility to carry forward the From the Heart of Washington Program. The successor organization must qualify as a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation. A majority of the board members must be from Washington commodity commissions, nonprofit associations organized to promote Washington agricultural products and agricultural industry groups. The fiscal agent means the Washington State Fruit Commission as a contractor of the department.

The Department of Agriculture and its fiscal agent may transfer program equipment, software and other assets, except the logo of the program, to the successor organization. The department retains the right to repossess any property transferred to the successor organization in the event the successor agency dissolves or is otherwise unable to carry out the program.

The department and its fiscal agent may provide support to the successor organization under contract for up to a two-year period after the effective date of the contract. The successor organization provides full reimbursement of all costs of contracted services.

The department must designate one or more persons to serve on the board of directors of the successor organization. The state is not liable for actions of any member of the board nor the actions of the successor organization.

The logo is the property of the department, but it may license the use of the logo to the successor organization and others as it deems appropriate. The department retains the right to cancel any license to use the logo.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The downturn of the apple economy of central Washington affected the building construction. Any work to aid in building strong markets will also assist in providing off-farm jobs. The purpose of the program is to help put a face on the agricultural industry.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Jim Jesernig, Potato and Onion Assn., Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers; Shannon Hitchcock, Heart of Washington; Leslie Emerick, WSDA; Ed Triezenberg, Carpenters Union.